A COMPETENCY BASED APPROACH TO TEACHER PREPARATION

Patricia Alvarez McHatton, Ph.D. and David Allsopp, Ph.D.
University of South Florida, Department of Special Education
Objectives

- Share our process in developing a competency based program of study that:
  - Integrates content across a logical developmental sequence
  - Scaffolds expectations for learning from an acquisition to generalization framework
  - Emphasizes collaborative teaching structures and situates the program to engage in interdisciplinary partnerships
  - Provides graduates with supported opportunities to gain the necessary knowledge, skills, and dispositions to meet the needs of students with disabilities
Starting with the End in Mind

What do we want our graduates to be able to know and do as special educators?

How can we structure instruction to ensure they graduate with the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to meet the needs of students with disabilities?

How is our program currently structured and what changes are necessary to meet our goals for producing Highly Effective special educators?

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The Process: A Problem Solving Approach

Problem Solving

- Define the Problem
- Gather and Analyze Data
- Develop and Implement Plan
- Monitor Effectiveness

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Reflections and Conversations

- We were doing a lot of good things
  - Extensive field experiences which were linked to course work
  - Performance based assessments that linked theory to practice
  - Required students to identify EBPs within lesson plans and provide rationale for their use
  - And many more…

We could always do better!
Reflections and Conversations

- Identified challenges for our students
  - Fractured curriculum
  - Redundancy in content that failed to build on previous learning
  - Inconsistent expectations
  - Idiosyncrasies of cohort learning
  - Need for more content in academic subjects
  - Need to bridge content with special education pedagogy
  - Realize limitations in relation to state certification expectations
Process for Improvement: Step 1

Meet with Stakeholders

Define the Problem

Monitor Effectiveness

Review of Literature K12 and Teacher Education

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Process for Improvement: Step 2

1. Gather Data and Analyze
2. Monitor Effectiveness
3. Experimentation
4. Review Syllabi and add Effective Practices

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Cut and Paste

- Course Objectives
- Accomplished Practices
- ESE K-12 Standards
- CEC Standards
- COEDU Conceptual Framework

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### Guiding Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What are K-12 Schools?</th>
<th>The Larger Educational and School Context</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is “teaching” in today’s K-12 schools?</td>
<td>Role of the Teacher and General Pedagogy</td>
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<td>What should students learn?</td>
<td>Curriculum</td>
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<td>Who are students with disabilities and how do they learn?</td>
<td>Characteristics and the Learning Process</td>
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<tr>
<td>What is Special Education and How Does it Work?</td>
<td>Foundations</td>
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<td>Who is the special educator in today’s schools and what do they do?</td>
<td>Instructional Practice and Service Delivery</td>
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<td>Who am I in relation to becoming a special educator and what do I need to become?</td>
<td>Professionalism and Self</td>
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<td>Questions</td>
<td>Goals</td>
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| **What are K-12 schools?**  
 *(The Larger Educational & School Context)* | • How are decisions made?  
 • Day to day functioning of schools  
 • Structure of schools, districts, state, federal  
 • Who is who?                                                                 |
| **What is special education and how does it work?**  
 *(Foundations)*                                      | • Students will understand the history of special education and implications for current and future practice *(History/Current)*  
 • Students will understand the socio-political context of Special Education  
 • Students will understand the impact of special education on the lives of students with disabilities and their families *(positive and negative)*  
 • Students will understand the technical and professional language of special education  
 • Students will understand ethical issues relevant to special education and disability  
 • Students will understand the manner in which individuals with disabilities have been and currently are portrayed in popular media *(e.g., literature, news, video/film, music, advertisement, etc.)* and the ramifications of these portrayals for individuals with disabilities and their families. |
Scaffolded – Spiraling Curriculum

- Acquisition
- Proficiency
- Maintenance
- Generalization

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guiding Question</th>
<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Who are students with disabilities and how do they learn?</strong> (Characteristics and the learning process)</td>
<td>Students understand disabilities as categorized by the IDEA</td>
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<td>Students will understanding how primary disability characteristics affect school success for students (i.e., academic, social/personal, emotional/behavioral)</td>
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<td>Students will understand critical issues in the lives of students with disabilities</td>
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<td>Guiding Questions</td>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Sample Objectives</td>
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| **Who are students with disabilities and how do they learn?**  
(Characteristics and the Learning Process)               | Students will understand the role of families in the lives of students with disabilities. | 6.0 Examine the interconnection among culture, limited English proficiency, socio-economic status, family systems, and the school experience. CEC CC1K2, CC2K5, GC1K2; AP 5; ESOL 2, 3: EEX 4742 |
<p>|                                                       | Students will understand how primary disability characteristics affect school success for students (i.e., academic, social/personal, emotional/behavioral). | 9.0 The student will identify and discuss environmental and social variables related to intellectual and developmental disabilities. CEC CC2K5; AP 8: EMR 4011 |</p>
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<td>Students will understand the manner in which decisions are made in K-12 schools from a systems perspective (Federal, state, LEA, school levels).</td>
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<td>Students will understand the structure of K-12 education at the federal, state, and local levels.</td>
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<td>Students will understand how schools operate on a day to day basis.</td>
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<td>Students will understand the concept of “accountability” and the various ways it can be operationalized.</td>
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Step 3

Gather Data and Analyze

Monitor Effectiveness

Integrated

Competencies

Scaffolded

Connected

Authentic

Rigorous

BLOCK LEARNING EXPERIENCES
Instructional Blocks

Semester 1
• 9 hour block
• Linked field experiences
• Partner schools

Semester 2
• 9 hour block
• Linked field experience Elementary Education focus
• Partner schools
• Content emphasis

Semester 3
• 5 hour block
• Mini classroom experience
• Partner district
• Content emphasis

Semester 4
• 9 hour block
• Linked field experience Secondary Education focus
• Partner schools
• Content emphasis

Semester 5
• Final internship
• Content emphasis
• Professional seminar
• PPPs
• Reading Endorsement
• ESOL Endorsement

Team Teaching Approach

Continuous Progress Monitoring: Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions
Currently...

- Finalizing course submission to reflect Instructional Blocks
- Pilot new program fall 2010
- Measurement and Educational Psychology and Social Foundations will be working with us to revise their courses so they are delivered within the spiraling curriculum
Revised Program Reflects the...

Changing Roles and Responsibilities
A Value Added Perspective on What Special Educators Provide

Teacher as Problem Solver
RTI
Data Driven Decision Making
Proficient with Effective Practices and Content
TEAM Oriented

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Contact Information

- Patricia Alvarez McHatton, Ph.D.
  mchatton@usf.edu
  813.974.9595 (office)

- David Allsopp, Ph.D.
  dallsopp@usf.edu
  813.974.3274

- Ann Cranston-Gingras, Ph.D.
  cranston@usf.edu

- Karen Colucci, Ph.D.
  colucci@usf.edu

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